

U.S. Serial No. 10/673,451

ASA-1005-02

REMARKS

The Applicants request reconsideration of the rejection.

Upon entry of the foregoing amendments, which were drafted with helpful input and approval by the Examiner, Claims 9-14 will be pending.

The Examiner objected to the Abstract as containing minor informalities on lines 3 and 5, as noted on Page 2 of the Office Action. The Abstract has been amended to address the Examiner's concerns.

Claim 9 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being incomplete for omitting a recitation that a sheet being examined has an element obtainable by the scanning unit, to support the existing limitation that the scanning unit acquires information obtained from the sheet. In reply, the Applicants propose to provide positive antecedent basis by reciting that the sheet includes information obtainable by the scanning unit and an electronic circuit chip which stores a unique number. With the Examiner's kind approval, the language and is difficult to rewrite the same has been deleted from the claim. Further, the Applicants propose to amend Claim 9 to recite that the scanning unit acquires "said information obtainable by said

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scanning unit, by scanning said sheet." The Applicants believe that these amendments address the Examiner's concerns, without narrowing the scope of Claim 9.

Claims 9-14 were also rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as being indefinite with regard to the structure of the electronic circuit chip, the function of the control chip, and the information obtained by the scanning unit. The Applicants further propose to amend Claim 9 to recite that the control unit obtains, rather than takes out, from the memory device the stored unique information correlated with the unique number, and to amend Claim 9 (as discussed above) to recite that the scanning unit acquires "said information obtainable by said scanning unit, by scanning said sheet." By these amendments, the Applicants believe that the Examiner's concerns have been addressed without narrowing the scope of the claims.

Claims 9-14 were further rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over Claims 1-10 of U.S. Patent No. 6,659,353.

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Without admitting to the propriety of the rejection, the Applicants submit herewith a Terminal Disclaimer to avoid the rejection.

In view of the Terminal Disclaimer and the foregoing amendments and remarks, the Applicants request reconsideration of the rejection and allowance of the claims.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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